

Instructor's Notes

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Introduction to Crossing Guard Training

This manual provides all the background information you need to conduct your local school crossing guard training. This section corresponds to the curriculum section that you will give to your crossing guards. However, this section includes guidelines on how to present all the information.

The information with a gray background gives you directions on how to use the material. Information with a white background either matches information in the guards' manuals or is information you need to give them.

WELCOME TO THE PARTICIPANTS

After the initial sign-in, the training supervisor should welcome the participants to the training course.

Let them know that their participation and input is very valuable in making sure the training is effective, enjoyable and useful.

Spend a few minutes introducing yourself and other instructors, (even if they are not currently present).

ORIENTATION TO FACILITIES

Make sure the participants know the location of the restroom facilities and if you have coffee and/or other refreshments, where they are located. If refreshments are furnished, acknowledge who provided them.

DURATION OF TRAINING

Remind them that this is a 6-hour training course, consisting of a classroom portion that is 4 hours and simulated field training which will last about 2 hours. Periodic breaks will also be provided. If the session covers the middle portion of the day, participants will have a break for lunch (on their own).

QUESTIONS

Emphasize that their questions and active participation are encouraged. Be sure to provide time (as noted throughout the curriculum) for participant questions.

OTHER

At the very beginning of the course, spend a few moments talking about the elements of the training, which will include:

- crossing procedures
- characteristics of children in traffic
- responsibilities of the crossing guard
- emergency procedures
- signalization and traffic signs
- professional guidelines
- legal issues

Goals of the School Crossing Guard Program

The purpose of the training is to comply with NC General Statute 20-114.1, which is shown in detail under “Laws and Policies” in the Reference section of this manual.

Explain to the participants that this training program serves four primary purposes:

- to help guards understand the importance of their job and the reason for the training
- to teach guards about the most common causes of pedestrian crashes
- to teach the correct crossing procedures
- to evaluate their ability to do the job effectively.

GOALS OF THE SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PROGRAM

PURPOSE: The primary mission of crossing guards is to:

- Teach children the proper way to cross a road
- Oversee the safe crossing of school children at designated crossing points
- Help children learn proper crossing techniques
- In some locations, to oversee the safe movement of school buses as they enter and exit the school property.

GOALS: Crossing guards accomplish this mission by meeting the four following goals:

- Encourage patterns of proper crossing behavior by school children
- Deter school children, as necessary, from committing unsafe and unlawful acts
- Inform motorists, by the appropriate signals, that school children are using, or about to use, the crossing (or that school buses are entering or exiting the school grounds)
- Observe and report to their supervisor incidents and/or conditions that present a potential hazard to the school children's or crossing guard's safety

OVERVIEW OF CROSSING GUARD'S JOB

- A crossing guard's primary duty is to use gaps, and where necessary, create gaps in traffic to help students cross the street safely.
- A crossing guard's first concern is the safety of the students under his or her supervision teaching them proper crossing techniques. This includes the proper search pattern of looking left-right-left and over their shoulder for turning traffic.
- Crossing guards are responsible for projecting a positive public image and serving as a positive role model for children.
- Crossing guards are responsible for observing and reporting conditions or incidents that may create a hazardous situation for pedestrians.
- Crossing guards are responsible for arriving promptly at their assigned post each day, and remaining at their post throughout their shift.

Training Objectives

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At this point, go over the objectives of today's training program.

Explain to the guards that these objectives (as shown below) are in their training packets.

Ask for questions after you've gone over the objectives.

Guards should:

- Know the full extent of their responsibilities
- Understand the major types of pedestrian crashes
- Understand the perspective of children in traffic
- Demonstrate proper crossing techniques and how to teach them to children
- Understand the concept of visibility and conspicuity
- Know how to handle emergency situations
- Know the proper procedures for reporting hazards and problems
- Understand the expected standards of behavior and conduct while on duty
- Provide input to help improve crossing guard training

*** QUESTIONS**

Pre-Test

A pre-test is given to the participants to see how much they already know and what misconceptions they might have. The results of the pre-test will help you determine how much emphasis to give to each section of the curriculum. The Pre-Test, which you should photocopy for each participant, is in the Administrative Section of this manual.

For the Pre-Test, you should:

- Explain the purpose of this test.
- Explain how the results will be used: To show what participants learn during the training.
- Explain the opportunity for an oral evaluation if necessary.
- Explain the pre-evaluation should take about 10-20 minutes to complete.
- Administer the written pre-test to participants. Have them correct their own tests, but don't discuss correct answers at this point since the training will address these issues.
- Have participants turn the pre-tests in to you when they've finished.

Crash/Behavior Problems

This section will give your crossing guards valuable background information on which behaviors can lead to crashes. The guards can then use this information to better explain to the children why they need to use proper crossing techniques.

Go over the statistical information shown below (and in the Curriculum Section for the guards). Additional statistical information is available in the Reference Section of this manual. Some of it is summarized by city and county so you can discuss particular problems in your local area.

Next go over the accident types and give examples of each so the guards will understand how these might occur at their crossings.

NORTH CAROLINA PEDESTRIAN CRASH STATISTICS

After the age of 4, more children die as pedestrians than from any other cause.

From 1960-96, over 20% of all North Carolina traffic fatalities were pedestrians (9,405 pedestrian fatalities out of 46,178 total fatalities)

- In 1996 alone, there were 1,723 pedestrian crashes and 169 fatalities
- Of these fatalities, 12 percent (21) involved children from infants to 14 years of age.

Children are among the most vulnerable to injury and death, as these numbers reflect, which makes the school crossing guard's job particularly important.

From the North Carolina Bicycle and Pedestrian Summary Crash Data, prepared by Robert J. Jaeger, October 17, 1997.

OVERVIEW OF COMMON CRASH TYPES

DART-OUT	<p>Most common; 30% of all pedestrian crashes occur mid-block, primarily in residential areas.</p> <p>Pedestrian darts into the street without warning and without searching for traffic.</p>
VEHICLE TURN/MERGE	<p>Driver is turning into and merging with traffic, and vehicle strikes a pedestrian headed in a direction different from the driver's focus of attention. Occurs almost always at intersections, including driveways.</p> <p>All age groups are involved.</p> <p>Pedestrian errors involve inattention to traffic or failure to conduct a proper search pattern.</p>
MULTIPLE THREAT	<p>While crossing a multi-lane street, the pedestrian is permitted to cross by one vehicle that has stopped, but is then struck by another vehicle that passes the stopped vehicle, traveling in the same direction.</p> <p>Pedestrian does not continue to search while crossing.</p>
BUS-STOP RELATED	<p>A pedestrian is struck by a vehicle while crossing in front of a school bus that is stopped at a bus stop.</p> <p>Pedestrian errors involve choosing a course with restricted visibility and failure to stop and search adequately.</p>

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VENDOR/ICE CREAM TRUCK	<p>Pedestrian is struck going to or from an ice cream or other vending vehicle. Occurs almost exclusively in residential areas. Pedestrian error is not searching properly.</p> <p>Almost always involves children under the age of 14.</p>
INTERSECTION DASH	<p>Pedestrian is struck by a moving vehicle while crossing at an intersection. Pedestrian is often running.</p> <p>May or may not be marked with a crosswalk. Frequently occurs in non-residential areas.</p> <p>Predominantly involves children age 5 - 9.</p> <p>Pedestrian error involves children distracted by play activity who fail to search properly.</p>
BACKING-UP VEHICLE	<p>In roadway, driveway or parking lot; occurs in residential and non-residential areas.</p> <p>Pedestrian error involves not being aware of or watching for backup lights or other signs that the vehicle is preparing to move.</p>

Ask for questions about the crash data and crash types before proceeding to the next section.

Next, go over the proper search pattern and discuss why each step is necessary. Discuss with the guards the types of things they and the children should be searching for when crossing.

Then discuss why guards are placed where they are and some of the considerations for placing guards.

PROPER SEARCH PATTERN

A common theme in each of the major crash types is the failure of the pedestrian to search properly before entering the travel lane.

One of the most important roles of the adult school crossing guard is to teach and reinforce proper crossing behavior.

A proper search pattern consists of these actions:

- Stop at the curb or edge of the road
- Look LEFT - RIGHT - then LEFT again for traffic
- If at an intersection, look over your shoulder for possible turning vehicles
- Keep scanning while crossing the road
- If there are parked cars or other obstacles, the children should walk to the edge of the obstacle to perform their search procedure.

This search pattern needs to be performed EACH TIME a guard begins to cross children. The guard should make sure that the children also search before and during each crossing.

Children should be encouraged to walk directly across the street at a consistent pace, after searching.

WARRANTS FOR USE OF CROSSING GUARDS

Very **briefly** explain why school crossing guards are placed at certain locations. Please refer to *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) section 7E-2. (See the Reference Section in this manual for relevant sections from the MUTCD.)

Also discuss any local ordinances that concern school zones and school crossing guards. Some localities have special ordinances empowering crossing guards as traffic control officers with specific authority.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS FOR CROSSING GUARD PLACEMENT

- Students tend to become impatient when delays are excessive due to unsafe crossing conditions.
- Some form of traffic control is essential when the number of safe gaps is less than one per minute.
- Students generally will not walk out of their way to avoid traffic hazards.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD PLACEMENT

Local or state traffic engineering departments and the relevant law enforcement agencies are responsible for gathering information and conducting the proper studies. Also taken into consideration is the law under NC General Statute 115C-240 (See “School Zone Laws” under Laws and Statutes of the Reference Section of this manual).

These are some of the considerations they take into account:

- GAP STUDIES - to determine the number and length of safe crossing opportunities available at a student crossing
- SIGHT DISTANCE - measured from the student's eye height on the corner toward the direction of approaching drivers.
- VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC VOLUMES - including turning vehicles
- AGES AND GRADES OF STUDENTS - primary grades (K-5) are in greater need of assistance
- VEHICULAR SPEEDS - faster vehicles require greater stopping distances. Younger children have a more difficult time judging the speed of an approaching vehicle.
- WIDTH OF STREET AND NUMBER OF LANES OF TRAFFIC
- EXISTING TRAFFIC CONTROLS - presence of traffic signals, signs and pavement markings. Signals can be a hazard if guards and students are not properly trained in their use.
- TRAFFIC CRASH HISTORY - consider type of crashes, the number of crashes and the time-of-day they occur at a specific location.

*** QUESTIONS**

Limitations of Children

Explain to crossing guards that it is important to understand how children differ from adults and how these differences can affect their safety. "Children in Traffic" is a 15-minute video intended as an education tool for adults, which explains why we can not treat children as "small adults". The video was produced in Europe in the 1970s, but is very relevant to situations in the U.S. today.

Show "Children in Traffic" video by the American Automobile Association (AAA). **Go over key points as outlined below.**

Major Points from "Children in Traffic" Film

1. Children see differently
The eye of the young child is capable of only two-thirds of the peripheral vision of the adult.
2. Children hear differently
They cannot determine the source of sounds.
3. Children and closure speeds
Children cannot judge distance and closure speeds. Practice will help.
4. Children mix fantasy with reality
At times, children think inanimate objects, such as cars, are alive.
5. Children have one-on-one focus
Children can only focus on one event, or thought, at a time.
6. Children are spontaneous and curious
This may lead them to dart quickly across the street.
7. Children will complete any motion they start.
Children may not respond to new stimuli, which spell danger.
8. Children overestimate their abilities
This could affect their timing and lead to an accident.
9. Children pattern their actions after others
Children will learn both the good and bad behaviors displayed by others.
10. Children are forced to respond to an adult world
A child's logic may not be appropriate for an adult world.
11. Children treasure near misses
A child may do something dangerous so that he can brag about it.

*** QUESTIONS**

Orientation to Organization Responsible for School Crossing Guards

Your crossing guards will need information about your organization/agency that they can refer to when they have questions or need to contact someone.

You should prepare a handout with the following information for the guards to keep in their training manuals (or training file) for reference:

- Name and phone number of guards' supervisor
- Structure of agency they work for--who are the officers in the agency
- Any local ordinances, policies, and procedures that the crossing guards may need to know which are not covered in this manual
- List of law enforcement/ emergency numbers
- Copy of the school calendar (can be obtained from school administrative office or from school board)
- List of schools in the district with the following information:
 - * Phone numbers of schools
 - * Principals' names
 - * Hours that schools are in session
- Roster of crossing guards containing:
 - * guards' names
 - * guards' phone numbers
 - * post location
 - * time of post

Go over all this information with the guards when you hand out this sheet.

***QUESTIONS**

Primary Responsibilities of the School Crossing Guard

This is your opportunity to go over with the guards what their responsibilities are before you get into other details about the execution of these responsibilities. Stress that the guards have a wonderful opportunity to help children learn the proper techniques to cross streets safely. Once the children have learned these skills well, they will be able to use them throughout their lives. However, it will take more than one lesson for these skills to become second nature to the children.

At the beginning of the school year, the guards should instruct the children in the proper search techniques and watch them to be sure the children are using them. After the first few days, the guards can ask the children what they are supposed to do. It's important to always monitor that the children are using the proper techniques.

Stress that the guards are important role models for the children, especially the younger ones, so it's important for the guards to always use the proper techniques.

Go over each of these responsibilities with the guards, then ask if they have any questions.

THE GUARD'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. First concern—the safety of the children
2. Use safe gaps to help children cross
3. When necessary, create safe gaps

To help students cross using traffic control devices properly, if provided, such as

- pedestrian lights/signals
- traffic lights/signs

Where the guard also directs the entrance/exit of school buses, the guard will use traffic signals, if available, or gaps in traffic to coordinate safe movement of the buses and other traffic.

4. Teach children proper crossing techniques and consistently monitor that they use them.
5. Be a **positive role model** with proper traffic safety skills for children, adults, and motorists. Children imitate and model the behavior of adults whom they admire.
6. Identify any problem conditions/behaviors
 - report to supervisor
 - report to local law enforcement agency
7. Follow any other applicable city/county laws

*** QUESTIONS**

Visibility and Conspicuity

Visibility and conspicuity are critical to the safety of both the crossing guards and the children. Stress that the guards help children learn to look and see by proper positioning and performing proper search patterns, but the guards must be properly visible to motorists while they are performing their duties.

Explain to guards that their equipment (fluorescent/retroreflective vests and gloves or hand-held stop signs and whistles) is what tells the motorists that pedestrians are about to enter the roadway. The fluorescent and/or retroreflective gloves help ensure that the hand signals are clearly observed.

Explain that a retroreflective stop paddle (strongly recommended) increases their visibility to motorists and clearly communicates the action that the motorist must take.

Go over some of the potential problems of conspicuity and their implications for the guards.

VISIBILITY means two things:

- being visible in the sense that guards should wear retroreflective or fluorescent material that alerts motorists that pedestrians are crossing or about to cross the street
- being visible in the sense that a guard's presence tends to deter unlawful or unsafe acts on the part of pedestrians and motorists.

CONSPICUITY

A guard helps children cross by being conspicuous to motorists through signals and clothing. These same visibility concepts help ensure that the guard remains safe while performing his or her duties.

A guard should make absolutely sure of being seen before stepping into the roadway to begin crossing students. Before entering the roadway, it is important to make eye contact with the first driver in the line of cars that you are about to stop.

VISUAL CLUTTER

Visual clutter such as advertising signs divert the motorist's attention. Also visual barriers such as parked cars or sign/utility poles hamper vision. Many bicycle and pedestrian-related crashes occur because the motor vehicle driver did not see the pedestrian or bicyclist. One of the responsibilities of a guard is to cut through this visual clutter and potential distractions to make sure that each lane of approaching traffic sees and recognizes that the guard is about to cross students.

The crossing guard's actions must be precise, firm and clear, following standard traffic control guidelines.

A crossing guard must **always** give the visual signal to stop, even if there are no cars in the immediate vicinity or when traffic is very light.

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CLOTHING THAT HELPS CONSPICUITY

Crossing guards can also help children learn to be more visible by encouraging them to wear visible colors.

The worst times for a pedestrian or bicyclist to be seen are:

- Night
- Twilight or dawn when sun glare is at its worst, especially on east-west roads

Children can improve their visibility and conspicuity by wearing bright clothes with contrasting colors. The most visible colors are yellow, white, orange, hot pink and bright green. Contrasting clothes such as pink and blue, stripes and polka-dots are also helpful.

Least visible to motorists: dark colors such as black, brown, navy, forest green and camouflage materials.

Retroreflective materials work best at night or in twilight conditions because they reflect light (such as from car's headlights).

WEATHER AFFECTS VISIBILITY

Weather conditions dramatically affect the ability of drivers to see crossing guards and students. During rainy weather conditions, drivers' attention is often distracted so that they may not see pedestrians. Drivers also need more stopping distance in bad weather, so greater visibility is required.

*** QUESTIONS**

Traffic Operations Factors

This section is intended for background information and reference only. The guards may want to refer to this information if they have questions about signs, signals, or markings at their crossing location.

School crossing guards are in a unique position to check on markings and signage at their crossing location, even though they are not directly responsible for them. Especially at the beginning of the school year, it's important to check that the proper markings are visible and that the required signs are in place. If flashing signals are used, be sure that they are working properly.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation relies on the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) for standards and procedures regarding school zones. The relevant sections of the MUTCD are included in the Reference section at the back of this manual.

Briefly go over the kinds of signs or markings the guards should expect at their locations. Explain that they should check the accuracy of any signs with information about opening and closing times for their school.

Remind them to report any problems to their supervisor.

The following information summarizes the relevant sections:

Signage/Pavement Markings:

- Pavement markings (crosswalks, stop lines, turn lanes etc.)

Relevant sections of MUTCD

7C-1 Function and Limitations of Markings

7C-3 Crosswalk Lines

7C-4 Stop Lines

7C-6 Word and Symbol Markings

- Advance warning signs, speed, others (MUTCD 7B-9, 7B-10, 7B-11, 7B-12, 7B-13)

Traffic Control Devices/Pedestrian Signs and Signals:

See Section 7D of the MUTCD

- Stop and yield signs
- School zone signs
- Portable school zones signs
- Traffic signals, phases, timing, length of protective turn phase, if any (MUTCD 7D-5)
- Meaning of Walk, Flashing Don't Walk, Steady Don't Walk (MUTCD 7D-5, 7D-9)

*** QUESTIONS**

Relevant Traffic Laws

Guards must know the relevant traffic laws that apply to pedestrians and bicyclists. The complete texts of the laws are included in the Reference section of this manual. Go over this summary of the laws with the guards and be sure they understand what they mean. If necessary, look at the detailed wording of the laws in the Reference Section of this manual.

Encourage the guards to report any problems to their supervisor.

Here is a summary of the most important laws:

- Motorists must yield to pedestrians on all turns.
- Motorists should obey the posted speed limits and should always be attentive and cautious when pedestrians are present, or likely to be present, especially in school zones.
- Motorists must stop when school bus lights are flashing and stop sign is extended on driver's side of the bus.
- Motorists must obey signals from school crossing guards.
- Motorists exiting a driveway or alley must yield to pedestrians
- Bicyclists must always ride with traffic. Children should walk their bicycles across the marked crossing following the crossing guard's directions.
- Pedestrians should use proper search techniques and never run across a crosswalk.
- There should be no parking near the intersection where the children will be crossing. That means guards should park their vehicles so they do not in any way interfere with the safety of the children or of motorists.

*** QUESTIONS**

Hazardous Conditions

Hazardous conditions can endanger both the crossing guard and the children. Obstructions and unusual conditions near the crossing location can lead to high risk vehicle/pedestrian conflicts. Encourage guards to survey their location right before school starts to identify and report any hazardous conditions that can be corrected.

Go over the list of hazards shown below and discuss with the guards how they should handle these situations. Keep the following information in mind during your discussion.

Some conditions may not be correctable. Discuss with the guards how they should handle these conditions to ensure their own safety and that of the children. Guards should be aware of malfunctioning traffic or pedestrian signals, school zone signals, broken sidewalks, and damaged, worn or missing traffic signs. Guards need to report any such hazardous conditions to their supervisor as soon as possible. Guards should park their own vehicle so they do not obstruct visibility for approaching cars or students or force pedestrians to walk in an unsafe location.

If a traffic signal is not functioning, the guard shall call his or her office immediately upon arrival at the school zone (or ask a motorist or school official to call) to obtain police assistance in directing traffic. If the light malfunctions during post time, ask a motorist to call the local police agency, requesting assistance. If the signal phase needs adjusting, the guard should report the problem as soon as possible.

Guards should also be alert to suspicious subjects in the area, such as an occupied parked car or a vehicle that repeatedly passes the guard's location. Students may tell the guards of suspicious subjects. The guard should not treat this information as factual, but should be cautious. In all these cases, the guard should notify his or her supervisor as soon as the shift ends.

If the guard feels that this situation needs immediate police attention, he or she should ask a motorist to call the local police agency for assistance.

Go over these hazards with the guards.

Hazards which can create **sight obstructions** may include but are not limited to these:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| • parked cars | • signs |
| • bushes or low-hanging tree branches | • mail boxes |
| • signal controller boxes | • benches |

Hazards which can **force pedestrians to walk in an unsafe location** may include:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| • standing water or mud on the sidewalk | • obstructions |
| • broken pavement | • no sidewalks |
| • open drainage grates | • parents loading or unloading |
| • overgrown plants | • parked vehicles |
| • construction debris | |
| • loose dogs | |

Other hazards:

- speeders
- inattentive motorists

Remember, look for hazards at the children's level...they see an entirely different picture from 4 feet tall. Report hazards to your supervisor.

*** QUESTIONS**

Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency on the post, guards must keep control of the situation and ensure the safety of the children.

Stress that the guard **MUST NOT** leave his or her post. The guard must stay with the students until it is safe to cross again. After the guard has assessed the situation, he or she may choose another crossing location with good visibility for crossing the children.

If the crash is major (involving multiple vehicles, for example), the guard should resume crossing students only after receiving assistance from law enforcement to direct motorists around the crash scene. While waiting for law enforcement, keep students grouped together.

REMEMBER, multiple motorists should be flagged down to call 911. The guard should instruct the motorist to give the closest intersection or cross street and describe the situation to the 911 operator. The guard should also ask a motorist to notify the school administration so they can assist with the children.

The injured victim(s) should not be moved by anyone other than emergency specialists who are authorized to render assistance. Guards should **NOT** render First Aid.

Remind the guards that their first responsibility is to protect themselves and the children from unsafe situations.

Go over the following information with the guards.

Several types of emergency situations that can occur include:

- motor vehicle/pedestrian crash
- motor vehicle/bicycle crash
- motor vehicle/motor vehicle crash
- sudden illness
- a child falling down and getting hurt

PROCEDURES

The same basic rules apply to each situation. Guards must:

- Keep control of the situation.
- Stop crossing the children until the guard has assessed the situation. If practical, the guard may select another temporary crossing location.
- Group children to maintain control (ask safety patrol to assist if available)
- Remain at their post with the children.
- Get multiple motorists to call 911 (if safety patrol is available, send him or her to school to have call made).
- **NOT MOVE THE VICTIM(S).**
- Always notify their supervisor as soon as possible of any emergency that may have occurred at their post.

*** QUESTIONS**

First Aid

This information should be kept simple, but stress that the guard shall not attempt to do anything that he or she is not trained or equipped to do.

Guards should be alerted to specific diseases that are transmitted through blood or body fluid secretions. Guards should not administer first aid to students if there is any chance that the guard may come into contact with blood or bodily secretions.

Discuss the following information with the guards and talk about some possible situations that might occur and how to handle them.

- The guard shall not attempt to do anything he or she is not trained or equipped to do.
- Guards should be alerted to specific diseases that are transmitted through blood, known as "Blood-borne". Example: HIV and Hepatitis B. Some of these are deadly diseases so guards should take care not to come in contact with any blood. Example: bloody noses and skinned knees or elbows
- Diseases that can be transmitted through air are called "Airborne". Example: Tuberculosis (TB)
- Emergency medical and law enforcement personnel have been instructed in Blood-borne/Airborne Pathogen Classes governed by federal law and given the proper equipment to deal with these types of emergencies. The standards for this instruction is mandated by the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the North Carolina Department of Labor.

*** QUESTIONS**

Incident Reporting

Crossing Guards are not law enforcement officers, nor are they assigned for the purpose of enforcing traffic laws. However, the guard is sometimes in a good position to observe infractions that can endanger others.

A crossing guard should not concern himself or herself with minor infractions, but in the event of a gross violation, the ability to describe the vehicle and license number or persons involved is very important. It is necessary for the guard to be able to give an accurate description of the vehicle or person involved. WRITE it down. It's a good idea to carry a notepad for this purpose, or the guard can write the information on his or her hand.

In the event of a traffic crash or infraction, a guard may be asked to provide information to law enforcement personnel. **Go over the guidelines for handling the media (shown below).**

Information required for reporting purposes:

- Note color, body style, size model of car.
- Note license plate number.
- Note features of the driver.
- Note time and day of incident.
- Report to supervisor.
- If an emergency has occurred, have multiple motorists call 911 to report.
- Keep a small note pad and pencil in shirt pocket for quick access or write on the hand.

Information required for reporting persons:

- Sex
- Race
- Age
- Clothing description
- Hair color
- Height & weight/body build
- Direction of travel

WHOM TO TALK WITH

Guards should talk to law enforcement personnel only. They should not talk to the media or the parties involved in the incident. They should politely refer any questions from the news media to their supervisor, giving the supervisor's name and phone number. They should CALL their supervisor immediately after post time to advise him or her of what occurred at their post.

*** QUESTIONS**

Bad Weather

Inclement weather tends to make people hurry and pay less attention. This applies to motorists as well as students. In bad weather, visibility is diminished and motorists cannot see pedestrians or bicyclists as well. Also, streets become slippery and stopping distances are increased. Traffic will increase as more parents drop off and pick up their children. For these reasons, it is critically important that crossing guards be alert and visible at their post during all weather conditions.

The guards may want to use retroreflective traffic cones in the roadway for added visibility in bad weather. They also serve as a reference point during good weather. Traffic cones may enhance the crossing area, giving visual aids to motorists, if placed correctly. Consult your traffic engineering staff for recommendations on correct placement.

Go over the following information with the guards and discuss any concerns or questions.

BAD WEATHER SUMMARY:

- Rain, lightning, high winds and fog are hazards.
- More stopping distance is needed for motorists when the weather is bad.
- Motorists cannot see bicycles, pedestrians and other motor vehicles as well.
- The guard and the students cannot see as well.
- The guards should NOT use umbrellas as they hamper hand and arm movement and decrease sight distance.
- The guard should always wear a retroreflective vest over a fluorescent raincoat.
- Students tend to run and not pay attention in bad weather because they are concerned only about getting home fast.
- The white material used to mark crosswalks can become extremely slippery when wet so the guard and the children must be extremely cautious to avoid falling or slipping.

Increased alertness, caution, and added conspicuity are necessary in bad weather situations.

*** QUESTIONS**

Public Image

The school crossing guard is frequently the most visible and recognizable representative of both the school system and local law enforcement. A school crossing guard is sometimes the only person affiliated with a law enforcement agency whom people will meet under pleasant circumstances. Crossing guards are also often the only law enforcement agency representative many citizens will see on a regular basis.

Because many people do not make distinctions between different agencies, crossing guards serve as a liaison between the law enforcement agency, school or traffic engineering division and the public. Therefore, a guard's behavior and attitude is a very important part of his or her duty.

A guard should always be courteous and helpful with citizens.

Because of this high visibility and responsibility as a role model, the school crossing guard should have an exemplary public image by

- Being on time, not early
- Having a neat appearance and proper uniform for occasion and weather
- Always standing (never sitting) at post
- Acting in a way that will reflect positively on agency

Go over DO'S and DON'TS with the crossing guards and discuss any concerns or questions.

DO'S

- Arrive at your post 5 minutes before starting time to assess conditions, not to start crossing
- Use every opportunity to reinforce proper crossing techniques and ensure that the children are using them.
- Exhibit safe crossing procedures at all times, including conducting the proper search pattern, each time you begin to cross students
- Always use proper equipment and wear appropriate attire
- Use pedestrian traffic signals, if available
- Keep clean and well-groomed
- Maintain self-control and good conduct
- Be firm, yet pleasant and courteous

*** QUESTIONS**

DON'TS

- Do not begin crossing children before your duty period begins. If you're responsible for activating warning lights, do not turn them on before the scheduled crossing time.
- Never be absent or late without informing your supervisor well in advance.
- Never transfer your responsibilities to children.
- Never leave the crossing during your time of duty.
- Do not physically discipline the children and use good judgment if you touch them.
- Do not attempt to discipline middle school students who are sassy or try to cross at a spot other than the designated crossing. Instead, enlist the help of school officials in dealing with the problem.
- Do not eat or drink while on duty.
- Do not smoke or use tobacco products while on duty.
- Do not use drugs or alcohol before or during duty.
- Do not sit in your car while on duty.
- Never read newspapers or books, listen to a radio or headset, or watch television.
- Never patronize liquor stores in uniform.
- Do not park your vehicle in a location that may obstruct visibility or create a hazard.
- Do not arrive at your post too early or stay later than required.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- If traffic cones are used, place only where directed by supervisor.
- Do not respond to requests or directives of school personnel, unless cleared by your supervisor
- Call in any illness or delays as early as possible—two hours, if possible, gives a supervisor time to find a replacement.
- Do not leave your post unattended.
- Always report any unusual or hazardous conditions to your supervisor. Example: students, adults, and motorists not abiding by rules.

*** QUESTIONS**

Uniforms

The supervising department may provide a department uniform or set a dress code. If a department uniform is used, it should be different from sworn law enforcement officers. If the agency is a Sheriff's department or Highway Patrol agency, the badges and patches should also be different.

Go over the items issued/required by your agency and discuss with the guards how they should be used/worn. Explain the rationale for each item.

4 uniform/equipment items are recommended for the school crossing guards:

- Fluorescent and retroreflective vest. The vests can be ordered with the words "Crossing Guard" on them.
- Retroreflective stop paddle and/or retroreflective gloves
- Whistle
- Fluorescent raincoat for inclement weather (optional)

The retroreflective vest should always be worn on top of any coat or raincoat to increase the guard's visibility with motorists.

*** QUESTIONS**

Legal and Risk Management Issues

While school crossing guard activity is not generally hazardous, there are some physical and legal risks involved. This section discusses some of these issues and steps crossing guards can take to eliminate or minimize these risks.

Beyond this classroom discussion, encourage guards to discuss legal or risk management issues with their supervisor and local law enforcement agency. NC General Statute 20-114.1(d) requires law enforcement agencies to provide indemnity against wrongful injury, property damage, or bodily injury for anyone appointed as traffic-control officer, which is interpreted to mean school crossing guards. The full text of this statute is included under “Laws & Policies” in the Reference section at the back of this manual.

Go over the information below and explain departmental policy to the guards

Legal limitations and liabilities may arise during the performance of duty. It is important for school crossing guards to be familiar with department policies and procedures and to always follow them. A school crossing guard is responsible for putting his/her agency "on notice" that a potential problem exists. This should be accomplished through the guard's immediate supervisor, unless the situation is an emergency when the guard or a motorist should call 911 or the local emergency number.

The crossing guard should always document date, time and problem for future reference. Also note who was notified and when.

In general, crossing guards may be liable for damages resulting from a problem or physical hazard they know to exist, yet fail to alert the responsible agency or immediate supervisor.

GOOD SAMARITAN LAW

North Carolina has a Good Samaritan Law (GS 20-166(d)) that exempts persons who render emergency aid in good faith at the scene of an emergency from liability for civil damages, as long as there is no objection from the injured victim(s):

GS 20-166(d)

Any person who renders first aid or emergency assistance at the scene of a motor vehicle accident on any street or highway to any person injured as a result of such accident, shall not be liable in civil damages for any acts or omissions relating to such services rendered, unless such acts or omissions amount to wanton conduct or intentional wrongdoing.

Despite this law, it is still important that crossing guards NOT attempt to provide first aid without proper training. All guards should be familiar with department policy on this issue.

Crossing guards are responsible ONLY for their posted time. Arriving too early, leaving early, arriving late or leaving late could subject a guard to liability.

Crossing guards are generally included under North Carolina's Worker's Compensation laws. Any injury must be reported **within 24 hours** in order to be covered. Check on department policy regarding this issue. Worker's Compensation is in effect only during the hours of duty and does not include traveling time to and from the post.

*** QUESTIONS**

Notes on In-the-Field Training

This section will guide you through the outdoor exercises at a simulated intersection. You should plan to demonstrate the proper crossing techniques the guards must use before engaging them in the simulation. Unless extreme weather conditions exist, it is important to hold the In-the-Field Training outside because the crossing guards must work in all kinds of weather conditions.

The elements of this session are an important aspect of the training program. Remind the participants that they must pass the in-the-field portion with all satisfactory marks to complete the course. They will also be expected to answer questions about correct crossing procedures and/or signals in the final test.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

About 15 to 20 guards is a comfortable size for each outdoor group. Make arrangements ahead of time for one NCDOT-trained trainer to lead each group. It is a good idea to have an assistant for each group, who should be an experienced guard thoroughly familiar with the NCDOT recommended crossing procedures. Be sure to go over with them ahead of time the details of activities for in-the-field training.

Assign the guards to groups when they register by numbers or color codes on their name tags. Have a Performance Checklist prepared for each crossing guard ahead of time, and give these to the appropriate group leaders.

Before going outside to do the in-the-field training, show the guards the approved crossing procedures. Explain clearly where the intersection and crosswalk markings are so they will understand what you are demonstrating. Use the illustrations at the end of this section to explain the general guidelines. Different strategies may be required for intersections or crossings that have specific problems. The guard's supervisor should determine the appropriate strategy in these cases, while following the overall guidelines provided here.

Be sure the guards understand the proper crossing procedures before you go outside; it is harder to keep the guards' attention once you go outside. Emphasize that guards must **NOT** assume that all students will cross properly. When a student is causing or involved in a dangerous situation, the guard shall verbally alert the student.

Also before you go outside, explain clearly what they will be doing. Inform the guards who will be in charge of each group and where each group is to go.

As each group gathers at their intersection, the instructor for that group will review the proper crossing procedures and what the group will be doing. As the guards practice the crossing procedure, the instructor will observe and coach them on any problems they are having. An NCDOT-trained instructor must check off each item on the Performance Checklist as the guard accomplishes it. After correcting any problems the guard is having, the instructor will give the guard another chance and again check off items as they are accomplished.

Each guard must be able to successfully complete each section of the Performance Checklist before the in-the-field training is completed. If a guard can not successfully complete any section by the end of the training, an additional in-the-field training session should be scheduled within two weeks. At this second in-the-field training session, the guard must be able to successfully complete all items.

If you have a large group of guards to train, it is easier to keep them all interested if everyone has a role to play. A proven technique is to subdivide each group into three equal groups for playing the roles of "crossing guards," "children" and "cars." The "children" would be crossed by the "crossing guards," while the "cars" would act as cars on the roadway. These elements give the "guards" a more realistic crossing situation, while, making the training fun and interesting. The three groups would exchange roles after each "crossing guard" has taken a turn, until everyone has had a chance to play the "crossing guard."

If you choose this option, it is best to have poster board or cardboard with car pictures on them available for those who will be playing the part of the "cars." These should be prepared ahead of time.

Overview of Crossing Guard Skills

PROPER POSITIONING

The guard should always stand where he or she can be clearly seen.

- **In the morning.** The guard's initial position is on the curb, on the same side as the approaching students, usually on the opposite side of the intersection from the school.
- **In the afternoon.** This position will be reversed, so that the guard's initial position is on the school side of the intersection.

The supervisor will help each guard determine proper placement according to the needs of a particular crossing.

SIGNALS/COMMUNICATION

- All communication must be uniform, crisp and clearly informative so that both motorists and pedestrians will know what is expected of them.
- **HAND** signals/movements are primarily used with motorists and bicyclists on the street, but can be used to signal children. However, it is important that these hand signals conform to standard traffic control procedures. The guard should **ALWAYS** establish eye contact with the person whose actions are being directed, whether motorist, bicyclist, or pedestrian.
- **VERBAL** messages may also be used with pedestrians and bicyclists on sidewalks. Be sure to establish clear eye contact with pedestrians when signaling them.

USE OF HANDS or PADDLE

The guard may use either a stop paddle or an orange gloved hand, or both (agency discretion). However, the use of hand-held stop signs or stop paddles is **strongly recommended** because they are highly visible and precise. Hand-held stop paddles must be made to standards specified in section 6F-2 of the MUTCD and should be either plastic, fiberglass or aluminum for safety reasons.

- Raise arm parallel to the ground with palm and fingers flexed upward to indicate stop.
- Continue to give the stop signal while in the roadway. Give the stop signal, even if there is no traffic at the time you enter the roadway.
- Follow the same procedure when using stop paddles.
- When exiting the roadway, continue to give the stop signal until completely out of the roadway. The guard should then signal that motorists may proceed through the crossing.

PREPARING THE STUDENTS

- The guard should always talk to the children about safe crossing techniques as they are gathering and waiting to be crossed. Go over with the children what they are searching for and why. Stress to them that they must continue looking, even while they are crossing the street.
- The guard must also watch for students rushing to join group. The guards may socialize with children while they are on the sidewalk but NOT while they are in the crosswalk.
- Remind the children to wait at least one step back from the curb or roadway edge until you have stopped traffic and signaled them to search and proceed. It can be helpful to mark a line with tape to show the children how far back they should stand.
- Use this opportunity to help students learn good pedestrian skills they can use any time. Remind them to look LEFT - RIGHT - LEFT and if at an intersection, over their shoulder, before they enter the roadway when you tell them to cross.
- Remind the children to stay in the crosswalk and to WALK, not run across the street. Bicyclists must walk their bicycles.
- Remind the children to continue looking until they are up on the opposite curb or completely out of the roadway.
- Monitor the children as much as possible to see that they are searching properly. Praise those who do and encourage those who don't.

CROSSING PROCEDURE

- Guards are responsible for lengthening, or when necessary, creating a gap in the traffic flow to allow students to cross safely. The guard's primary role is the safety of the children, not helping motorists. However, he or she may need to use standard traffic control techniques to signal motorists and school buses as part of their duties.
- Where traffic signals are available, ALWAYS cross students when the light is red for the motorists. ALWAYS use pedestrian signals if available.
- Scan traffic (continual LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT motion) for a proper gap to stop traffic, and if at an intersection, scan over the shoulder for turning traffic.
- Make eye contact with the first approaching motorist **in each lane** when entering the roadway to alert traffic. Be sure to look for the commuter bicyclist who will most likely be at the right-hand edge of the lane. Alert all traffic, one lane at a time to stop.
- Point to the driver of interest, then give appropriate gesture to stop and remain stopped. If using whistle for motorists, use one long blast to stop traffic or several short blasts to get the attention of a problem motorist or pedestrian.
- ALWAYS follow proper procedure to stop traffic, even when traffic is light or no cars are in the immediate vicinity.
- Position yourself at the approach edge of the crosswalk nearest the center of the intersection when alerting traffic.
- Do not cross students if there is any traffic moving or if any vehicles are in the crosswalk.
- Remain alert. **Do not assume** all cars will stop or remain stopped.

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- DO NOT allow any cars to violate a crosswalk or crossing area that students are or will be using.
- If a motorist is not responding, give several short blasts on whistle and point to the motorist. When you have the motorist's attention, give one long whistle blast for a stop. If a motorist still fails to respond, report the incident with license number and description of the car and driver to your supervisor.
- After all traffic has stopped, position yourself in the crosswalk so you can see the students and watch traffic. Turn your head and body as necessary to constantly monitor the situation.
- When ALL vehicular traffic is stopped, tell students to proceed. Verbal signals should be clear and simple such as "OK, look LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT" ("and over your shoulder," if applicable.) Make eye contact with the students and signal for them to cross with your free hand, continuing to give the stop signal with your other hand.
- Be sure to keep the stop paddle perpendicular to the stopped traffic so that it is clearly visible to all motorists.
- Remain in position until the last student has stepped up on the opposite curb, completely out of the roadway.
- If necessary, halt pedestrian movement in cases of stragglers. Signal for them to stop by calling to them "STOP" or "WAIT", and be sure they comply before letting traffic resume.
- After successfully crossing the students, keep your hand, or the stop paddle, extended toward the immediate vehicular traffic threat until you reach the initial position on the curb.
- When back on the curb, lower your hand and signal for traffic to resume.
- Wait for next group of students and repeat.

NECESSARY SKILLS FOR CROSSING GUARDS

- Grouping pedestrians
- Explaining to pedestrians how to cross properly
- Observing traffic flow and conditions
- Waiting for appropriate gaps
- Giving the appropriate signals to traffic
- Telling pedestrians to cross and observing that they use proper pedestrian skills
- Halting pedestrians' movement before traffic flow begins
- Procedures for crossing mid-block
- Procedures for crossing unsignalized intersections
- Procedures for crossing signalized intersections
- Procedures for crossing multi-lane or divided highway

*** QUESTIONS**